

The McGill Daily

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Compulsive liars since 1847

Monday, September 29, 1997

LESS SERVICE, HIGHER FEES: IS THERE AN ALTERNATIVE?

by Anna Liachenko

Recent cutbacks to education and increasing tuition fees have pushed a group of McGill students, professors and administrative staff to propose an alternative University Budget. Called the McGill Alternative Budget Group, their goal is to present the Board of Governors with a budgetary alternative for 1998-99.

At the SSMU council meeting last Thursday, a motion was passed which stated that SSMU will "officially lend its support to the initiatives of the McGill Alternative Budget Group". SSMU President Tara Newell is relieved that the issue will be dealt with. "This decision adds legitimacy to the cause," she says.

The group was organized last year by Anna Kruzynski, VP-University Affairs of the Post-Graduate Students' Society (PGSS). Kruzynski is enthusiastic about the potential for this new group. "Budget is a question of priorities," she says.

According to Kruzynski, the three main goals of the McGill Alternative Budget will be: *accessibility*, which involves an increase in public funding and lower tuition for Canadian students, as well as "friendlier" fees for interna-

tional students, *job security*, and *stability*, making the institution more democratic. The Group feels that the university budget plan should include more public input in the initial stages of its preparation. Normally, when a proposal reaches the Board of Governors, it has almost reached its final version, and it is too late to make any radical changes.

Kruzynski points out that last year, after students protesting an increase in fees occupied Principal Shapiro's office, Shapiro challenged students to come up with an alternative. However, last year there was not sufficient time to create a sound plan.

These new fees were just the latest in a series of university policies that have threatened the accessibility of education. Because of the provincial cutbacks to the operating grants of Quebec universities, McGill is cutting back on staff and services as well as increasing student fees. The \$18 million dollar cutback to McGill in the last year has not been easy to accommodate. Class sizes, which are already very large in comparison to other universities, are only going to increase as McGill's official policy of replacing only one of every three retiring professors

takes effect. According to an article published in the Montreal Mirror newspaper on September 9, 420 administrative and support staff positions at McGill have been eliminated, and library assistant staff has been reduced from 202 to 160 in the last four years.

Despite these cuts, students are paying more and more for their educations. In addition to the introduction of differential tuition fees for out-of-province Canadian students imposed by the provincial government, the university is raising so-called "service charges". All undergraduates must pay an \$80 "registration charge" and a \$60 "information technology charge". This extra charge has been seen by some as "a tuition fee masquerading as a service charge", which is used to get around the limit on tuition fees set by the provincial government.

Graduate students are also suffering some changes. In addition to the differential fee for out-of-province students, the additional session fees have increased by 30% this semester and will continue to grow.

Principal Shapiro has no good news for students. He predicts that "in future students will bear a greater portion of the cost". He

argues that increasing student fees is the only way to sustain a decent quality of education.

Fortunately, not everyone agrees with the Principal's position. A similar concern over a lack of democracy when putting together a budget plan was raised two years ago by the University of Toronto's Graduate Student Union. "Money operations were hidden from the general public," says James Hoch, president of the Graduate Student Union. When raw numbers were requested and a thorough examination was made, it turned out that the university's administration was creating an artificial deficit in the operating grant. Some of the money normally spent on various services and salaries was being transferred to endowment funds, which are untouchable investments. As a result, an artificial deficit was created and the university had to start cutting and stop hiring.

Unsatisfied with this course of events, the University of Toronto's Graduate Student Union proposed an alternative budget plan. According to this plan, the university could actually expand instead of downsizing, as it had been doing. The plan was reviewed and found reasonable by financial con-

sultants from several major corporations. It was totally ignored by the university's administration.

Not giving up, the University of Toronto Graduate Student Union continues to review the underlying assumptions of the university's budget plan, such as privatization, and is going to fight for changes. Students want to see their university as a public and democratic institution.

The McGill Alternative Budget group is hoping that their budget will not suffer the same fate as that of the U of T group. According to Anna Kruzynski, the McGill Group have a greater to succeed due to wide representation. Professors, graduates, undergraduates, librarians, secretaries and others has joined the group.

However, no one from high management has so far expressed an interest to join.

"University administration has one perspective," says Tara Newell, SSMU president and member of the Alternative Budget Group, "[but] creative ideas come from everywhere." The needs of different public groups have to be considered. "We want to generate a debate," Kruzynski says. "[And] we want to be heard in a serious way," adds Newell.

Paragraphe (Inc.)omplete

Another independent café disappears

by Martha MacDonald

The Paragraphe bookstore is moving to McGill College, but the café is not moving with it. Instead, a new Second Cup will open in the adjacent office space.

"It's sad that the café is closing" says café manager and McGill graduate Kaz Amaranth. "There isn't much diversity in the food available around campus."

Jonathan Penney, co-owner of Paragraphe, explains "we've had the café for seventeen years but it has always lost money. Our main business is book-vending and we want to focus on that." Paragraphe approached Second Cup because "of all the major chains, Second Cup seemed the funkier," Penney stated.

In response to criticism that the Second Cup is ruining the chances for independent cafés, Regional Manager for the Second Cup Dale Thoburne claims "there is enough room for everyone in Québec. Every company has its own niche, and we complement more than anything. We encourage people to patronize other cafés."

Penney explains that the book-

store is moving because "for the last five to ten years, the current location has been too small. To compete with large bookstores like Chapters, we need more space."

The move coincides with the recent appearance of the Chapters chain in Montréal, and its anticipated expansion into the McGill community. McGill Senate will debate transferring the management of the McGill Bookstore to the chain at an upcoming meeting on October 1.

It is a comment on the business climate in Montréal that Paragraphe must give its spot on the café scene to one big corporation to save its

bookstore from potentially being trampled by another.

While the new Paragraphe location will open this Wednesday, the Second Cup café is scheduled

to open in the first week of November.

The style and atmosphere of the new Second Cup will be "tied into the bookstore," says Thoburne. "There will be twenty-two seats, and a terrasse during the summer," she adds, but "there will be no kitchen."

Second Cup already has twenty-seven cafés in the province, twenty-one of which are in the downtown core of Montréal. According to Thoburne, the company has "two more cafés slated, but we're moving more towards the East end [of Montréal]. We'll stop expanding when the com-

munity says there are enough."

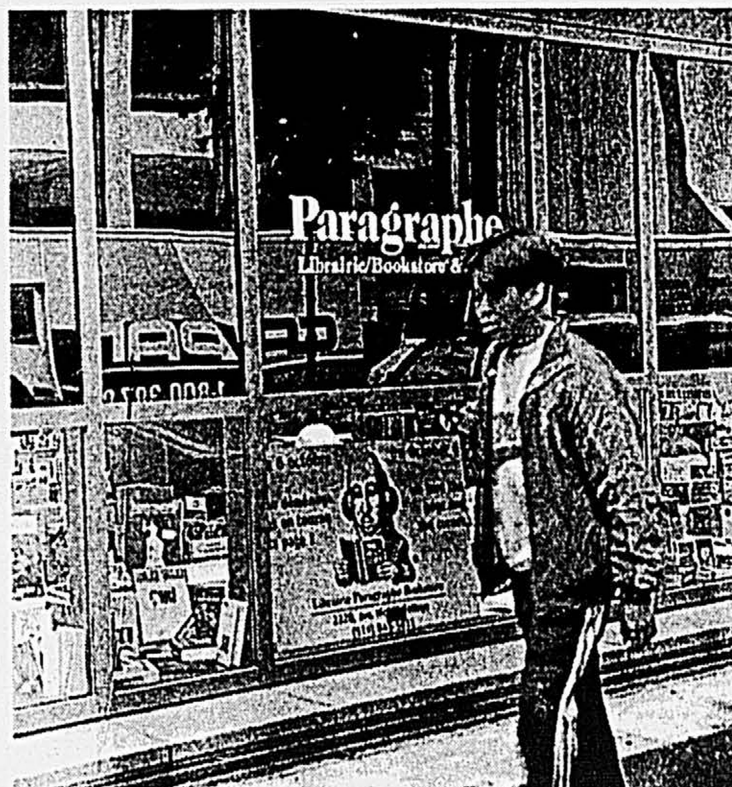
Students are voicing that opinion already.

U1 student Katherine Moe explains "the Second Cup is so generic. I'd rather have a unique café in the bookstore. I'll go looking for another place."

"I have nothing against the Second Cup," claims Theresa Dejmeck, a U3 student, "but I like independent cafés. Café Beenz and Nostalgie both closed because of Second Cup. I went to Paragraphe every Wednesday" continues Dejmeck. "That was my ritual. The café there was original. That's what I love about this city."

But according to Thoburne, the Second Cup is "very excited about combining with a Montréal-based company. We couldn't have done better than Paragraphe." Second Cup is itself a Canadian company, and the franchisee of the new café is a Montréaler.

"We currently employ five hundred students in Québec" adds Thoburne, "and we'll be hiring more for the new café." That is, if they have any patrons.



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HYDE PARK

"Show us what it takes to win!"

After hearing scathing rumours concerning the controversial nature of the so-called "Wet-T-Shirt Wednesdays" at the Peel Pub, a close male friend and I decided to investigate the validity of these claims.

When we entered the Peel Pub at approximately 10:45pm on Wednesday, September 17, 1997 the crowd consisted equally of men and women. As we sat down we noticed two bouncers carrying an inflatable pool to a stage set up in one corner of the bar. Then, over blaring music, the MC of the evening requested contestants for the 'wet-boxer' and 'wet-t-shirt' contests.

Although not mentioned on the posters advertising the weekly program, three bare-chested male contestants competed in the 'wet-boxer' contest for the \$100 cash prize. At 11pm, female participants were invited on stage to pour water over each of the dancing contestants. The crowd chose the contestant wearing a black bathing suit as the winner.

At midnight, 45 minutes after

the end of the 'wet-boxer' contest, we noticed that the crowd now consisted of more men than women. Four female contestants competing for the \$200 cash prize walked out of the women's wash-room and onto the stage wearing large white 'Peel Pub' t-shirts. As male volunteers poured water onto the dancing female contestants, it became apparent that the women were wearing only panties under their t-shirts.

The crowd chose two of these contestants to be 'finalists.' After this round, in response to a roar of mostly male voices chanting "REMATCH! REMATCH!" and rhythmic pounding of fists on ta-

breasts and then pulled her underwear partially down to fully reveal her bare buttocks and partially reveal her crotch. Finally, at 12:45pm, and much to the crowd's dismay, the contest ended in a tie.

I felt that the emphasis of the evening was disproportionately placed on the 'wet-t-shirt' contest. I acknowledge the feeble attempt made on the part of the Peel Pub to equalize the objectification of the female body by introducing the objectification of the male body. However, a contest of this nature being held in a public bar such as the Peel Pub contributes to a society in which women are paid to be nothing but sexual ob-

Throne Speech or Toilet Talk?

Last week's throne speech, delivered by the Governor General of Canada, on behalf of the Federal government, was, quite simply, bullshit. The fifty minute national address was a most astonishing piece of propaganda.

The message was structured around the theme of building a successful Canada for the future. This was the first hint of putridity in the air: such future-talk usually marks an inability to deal with current problems. I knew something was afoot, though, when I heard, "In recent years, Canadians (read middle and lower income Canadians) worked hard and sacrificed (read were unemployed, put on workfare, or living in poverty) to overcome many of our nation's challenge. We succeeded (read in convincing the population that shared wealth is no longer a Canadian ideal so we can now 'reduce taxes' for upper income Canadians), and have started to put in place a strong foundation for our success in the new millennium." The promise is the 'justification' for a regime of slashing public goods in this country, and a facade for the inability to deal with unemployment.

My disgust increased as I listened to the way the terms 'Canadians' and 'We' were employed. Over and over I heard what 'Canadians' feel, want, take pride in, followed by what 'We' will have to do to achieve these goals. The not-so-subtle sub-text was: if Canadians truly "want a just and sharing society, prosperous society, a tolerant and highly diverse society, a society that fosters excellence and creativity," we will all have to pull our weight. Of course the 'We' intended encompass the federal government and all Canadians will

certainly not be the same. 'We,' (single parents who can't afford post-secondary education, or the street people being pushed out of our communities) that will have to sacrifice. The rhetoric here masks the fact that this "necessary" reduction of social programs is the very thing that will eliminate justice, sharing, tolerance and prosperity in our society.

With my "hermeneutical suspicion" thus activated, I was not surprised when I heard that the "widest possible access to post-secondary education" would be pursued through further changes to the Canada Student Loans Program, and through new scholarships, rather than through increased transfer payments to the provinces for education. And I was not surprised to hear the government trying to forge links between corporations and education. Both of these approaches to education continue to think of it as a private good to benefit the private sector and to be funded privately, rather than as a public good to be funded through a progressive tax system and adequate transfer payments to the provinces.

I wish I had the space to comment on other aspects of the speech, such as the absolute inadequacy of the much extolled Child Tax Benefit for children living in poverty, or the ethical problems with Canada's "campaign for liberalized trade." I summarize though by saying that given the general stench of the message, the title "Throne Speech" is entirely appropriate.

— Erin Runions
Québec Chairperson
Canadian Federation of Students



The scene at Peel Pub on September 17, 1997

bles the MC told the female contestants to "show us what it takes to win." While being soaked by another round of water one contestant fully exposed her breasts and, while blushing, the second contestant revealed a tattoo on her left breast. After this round, and in response to the audience requesting another rematch, the first contestant exposed her

jects. As a male university student, I feel insulted that a bar catering to people like myself would attempt to target my business in this fashion. Is there any way that this form of entertainment, so publicly damaging to the credibility of women, can be eliminated?

— Paul Grossman
a concerned McGill student

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editorial offices:
3480 McTavish St., Montréal, QC, room B-03, H3A 1X9
business and advertising office:
3480 McTavish St., Montréal, QC, room B-17, H3A 1X9
email:
daily@generation.net

editorial:
(514)-398-6784
business/advertising:
(514)-398-6790
fax:
(514)-398-8318

business manager:
Marian Schrier
assistant business manager:
Jo-Anne Pickel
advertising management:
Lety Malteo, Boris Shedov
advertising layout and design:
Mark Brooker

contributors:

Federico Barabana, Isaac Benrobit, Ben Hardy, Anna Liabenko, Mariba MacDonald, Jeremy Nelson, David Reesley, Jane Tremblay, Jeff Webber

co-ordinating editor:

Sonia Verma
co-ordinating news editor:
Mark Rainer
co-ordinating culture editor:
Noémie Tournant
news editors:
Maggie Gilmour, Keri Kosuri
culture editors:
Jessica Lim, Julien Lapointe
features editor:

daily francais:

Magali Boisier

photo editors:

Lori Braun, —

layout and design co-ordinators:

Paul Reeve, Louis Addario-Berry

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Samantha Murphy

project co-ordinator:

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information editor:

Robin Peller

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ERRATA

The following errors appeared in the September 22 issue of *The Daily* in Tamara Kochar's story:

Principal Shapiro's comment should have read, "It is a marked step forward" and not "It is a markets forward.."

No pun intended.

Sexual Harassment Assessor Sharon Bezeau's name was misspelled as Sharon Bezel.

Vice Principal Bill Chan was wrongly referred to as Raymond Chan, SSMU VP University Affairs Elizabeth Gomery's name was misspelled as Elizabeth Gomorra.

The Daily regrets the confusion in identities.

Federalism unde

Professors Balthaza

by Jeff Webber

Louis Balthazar, political science professor at Université Laval, unleashed his ideas about Quebec and federalism in Canada to a large group of McGill students, on Thursday.

In room 232 of the Leacock building, Louis Balthazar, a guest lecturer brought in by the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada, aired his perceptions about the rather dim future of federalism in Canada in relation to Quebec. Christopher Manfredi, professor of political science at McGill, then offered a brief response to Balthazar's argument.

Balthazar opened his speech with the assertion that, "Quebeckers are fundamentally federalist, and all public opinions show that...we have a very strong majority of Quebeckers that are attached to Canada and see federalism as an ideal... as the best ideal." He went on to explain why he felt the results of the last referendum were so close.

"A great number of federalists voted Yes, and this is the tragedy."

Balthazar focused on the history of Quebec since the Quiet Revolution (a period of intense and rapid social change in Quebec in the early sixties that resulted from the loosening of the church's authority) until the present day to explain the distinctiveness of Quebec, and Quebec's

unique views on federalism..

According to Balthazar, the early sixties were a period of time in Quebec that fostered "a particular conception of Canadian federalism that allowed Quebec to think of itself as a state of its own, as a society of its own."

This vision of federalism, Balthazar insisted, encompassed

"the divisibility of sovereignty and the sharing of power between two levels of government: the federal and provincial governments, for the maintenance, but not subordination, of one another."

He stated that during the 1960's barely 10 per cent of

so many disenchanted federalists," Balthazar declared.

From the 1960's Balthazar moved to the 1970's, and bitterly attacked the policies of the Liberal government under prime minister Trudeau.

First, he stated that Trudeau's answer of national bilingualism as the solution to all of Quebec's problems, was never accepted in Quebec. Balthazar said that Quebeckers are realistic people, and that they acknowledged that one can only live fully in French in Canada, within the boundaries of Quebec.

Further, Balthazar condemned the multiculturalism policies of the Liberal government in the 1970's because he said it had a detrimental impact on the survival of French in Quebec.

"It's not that Quebeckers don't believe in multiculturalism, but that they believe that multiculturalism in French and multiculturalism in English are two different things," Balthazar said. He continued by stating that multiculturalism policies would be positive if they could encompass the idea of integration in French in Quebec (i.e., the teaching of immigrant children in French in Quebec.)

With the disenchantment of many Quebec federalists caused by Trudeau's policies caused many Quebeckers, who were traditionally federalists, to vote for the Parti Quebecois, resulting in their victory in 1976, in Quebec. Because of this separatist threat, Trudeau became worried, according to Balthazar, and implemented a task force on national unity that lasted from 1977 to 1979.

The task force, made up of distinguished federalists, recommended that Quebec should have all the power necessary to protect its distinctive character,

"Quebeckers are fundamentally federalist, and all public opinions show that."

Balthazar explained. Then he asked with disgust, "What happened to the report? Nothing. It was shelved and the issue was never addressed."

The failed Meech Lake Accord was the next topic addressed in Balthazar's lecture as a fundamental, historical piece behind the disenchantment of Quebeckers towards federalism in Canada. The Meech Lake Accord was a proposed constitutional amendment that would have guaranteed more autonomy for the provinces, however, as he said, "Meech Lake was a very, very federalist document," and that it "was not that the provinces could get new power... it was that the provinces could keep

Balthazar continued extensively on what he perceived the Meech Lake Accord really embodied. "What Meech said explicitly is that a province can opt out of a federal/provincial program that is believed to invade provincial jurisdiction."

As a result of the failure of the Meech Lake Accord, Balthazar said Quebec became isolated.

"How come in 1981, when the second largest populated province in Canada [Quebec] objected to the Constitution process, it was repatriated [the constitution was passed nonetheless] and when five little amendments [of the Meech Lake Accord] were proposed, it couldn't work because we had to wait until Manitoba and Newfoundland had agreed."

"This was an agreement that satisfied minimal conditions in Quebec. This was an agreement that satisfied a majority of the people in Quebec. And it was

rejected. If you reject what I think is minimal for my survival and my recognition, than you are quite close to rejecting me," Balthazar said. After the Meech Lake Accord, Balthazar notes this feeling of isolation in Quebec as the reason for the dramatic increase in the support for sovereignty that followed.

Balthazar was running short in his allotted time for debate, thus concluded hurriedly with his ideas for the future of Quebec.

He had a positive projection for the outcome of the Calgary Declaration, a meeting of the English speaking



The student expressed concern for how anything would ever be resolved when comments that trivialize Quebec's distinctiveness are made incessantly by the provincial leaders of Canada outside Quebec.

it is important to realize that many Quebeckers were raised to believe in this type of federalism. "No wonder that there has been



the power, and protect the power that they already had in the constitution."

er question

a and Manfredi debate over the unity of Canada

exten- premiers on the issue of national
d the unity occurring presently, with
mbod- some qualifications. He said that
licitly the Calgary Declaration may
out of "eventually break some ice in the
gram right direction, although it is not
rovin- much, much less than what

hope for the future of federalism
within this country, Balthazar
concluded.

When Balthazar had finished,
it was McGill's Christopher
Manfredi's turn to contest three
core elements of Balthazar's as-

searchers from Stanford Univer-
sity, and the University of To-
ronto, that extensively surveyed
how Quebecers felt about the
Charter. According to Manfredi,
"they found that, although
francophones were slightly less
aware [of the Charter] than Eng-
lish speaking Canadians, those
who did have knowledge of it
shared similarly positive evalua-
tions of the Charter."

He continued to say that the
study found that "even 94 per-
cent of Parti Quebecois activists
in this survey thought that the
Charter was 'very good' or 'some-
what good.'" Manfredi went on to
explain that Quebecers also see
the Charter, like the rest of Ca-
nadians, as a document that pro-
tects their rights.

Next, Manfredi answered the
second question he posed of
Balthazar. Manfredi claims that
since 1982, the biggest loser in
relation to the Charter has
been the federal govern-
ment. "The Supreme Court
of Canada has nullified 51
provincial and federal
laws since the Charter.
Ironically, it's nullified
twice as many federal
laws than provincial
laws... Moreover, the
federal government is
less successful in de-
fending its laws
[against Charter chal-
lenges] than provin-
cial governments, by
a factor of about 10
percent." Central to
Manfredi's argument
was that distinctiveness
could be main-
tained within federalism, and
that the Charter in 1982 had not
changed this fact.

"So whatever symbolic
impact that the Charter
might be, I think there is
little empirical evidence
to suggest that provincial
policy discretion has been
subjected to sustained
impact by the Supreme
Court of Canada under
the Charter," stated
Manfredi.

The second fundamen-
tal point of Balthazar's ar-
gument that Manfredi
challenges, is the idea that the
Charter has had a negative im-
pact on Quebec's policy discre-
tion specifically. To address this
issue Manfredi referred to a point
he had previously mentioned. "I

said there have been 17 provin-
cial laws nullified by the Supreme
Court of Canada. Five of those
laws have been Quebec laws." Manfredi went on to argue that
only three of the four laws had
anything remotely to do with
Quebec's distinctiveness. Those
three particular laws pertained to
language and education. "But in
two of those three cases, Quebec
has been able to reassert its
policy by invoking the notwith-
standing clause," said Manfredi.
He continued to say that the Su-
preme Court of Canada has actu-
ally been more positive to Que-
bec laws than the Quebec Court
of Appeal.

"Regard- less of
Pierre
Tubé

federalism for local distinctive-
ness is to look for a false di-
chotomy."

"The Charter didn't create a
new vision of national citizen-
ship. What it did is it created a
vision of equal citizenship. And
that vision of equal citizenship
has created a dynamic in which
what you have is simultaneous
demands for equal rights to self
government." Manfredi ex-
plained that Quebec is fearful of
equality for all the provinces, but
he declared that equality does
not necessarily mean sameness.
"In fact, equality, equal right to
self government for the citizens
of each of the provinces, leads to
an asymmetry and distinctiveness," said Manfredi.

After both professors had
given their speeches they re-
sponded to questions from the
audience. A reoccurring theme
among the questions was
that neither of the speak-
ers seemed to be ad-
dressing relevant is-
sues to the future of
federalism in
Canada. Several
people who asked
questions, or read
statements, came
to the conclusion
that the two
speakers were
telling us what is,
but had no vi-
sion of where to
go. One discour-
aged third year
McGill political
science stu-
dent asked
how Balthazar

can have any positive intuitions
about the outcome of the Calgary
Declaration when comments of
this sort are being made by On-
tario premier Mike Harris.

Harris stated that British Co-
lumbia was distinct because it
had salmon in its rivers. The stu-
dent expressed concern for how
anything would ever be resolved
when comments that trivialize
Quebec's distinctiveness are
made incessantly by the provin-
cial leaders of Canada outside
Quebec. Balthazar basically had
no response, except that he
agreed with him completely.



ity of Meech would have done." In con-
clusion, Balthazar listed Quebec's
distinctive qualities and its hopes
for the future.

"Quebec has four components.
It has its French speaking major-
ity, it is influenced by a strong
and important British tradition,
and third, it is more and more in-
fluenced by its immigration... And
it changed for the best. And
fourth, of course, Quebec is also,
should say his first prob-
ably, strongly
influenced by
the intercourse
with the abo-
iginal commu-
nity... Quebec
is a province
where there
was more ex-
change, more
intermarriage.
Where the abo-
iginal lan-
guages are still alive to a larger
extent [than the other provin-
ces]." These are the distin-
guishing factors of Quebec, and
they should be recognized by the
rest of Canada if there is any

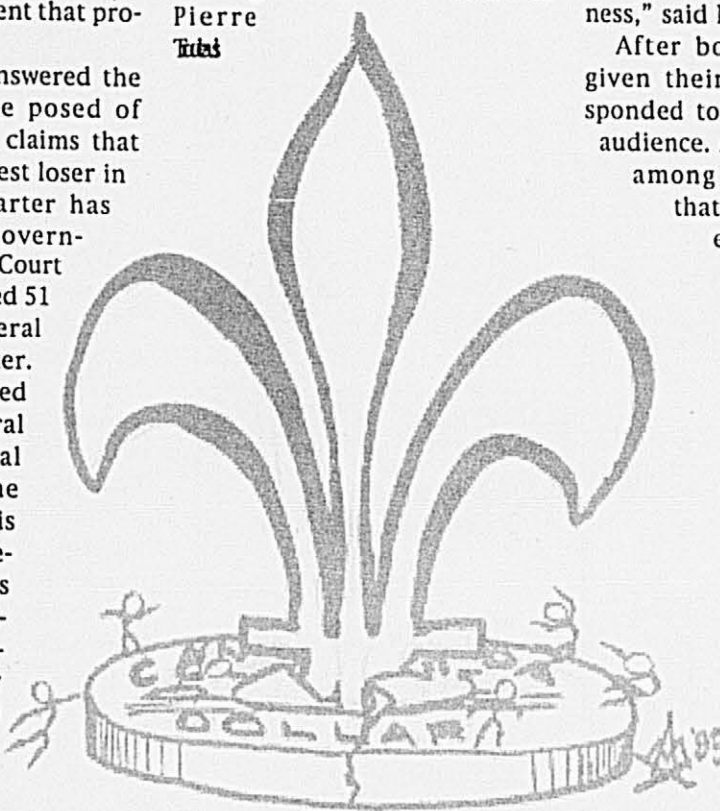
sertions. First Manfredi ques-
tioned Balthazar's claim that Ca-
nadian federalism impedes Que-
bec's ability to preserve its dis-
tinctiveness, and that those im-
pediments were exasperated by
the adoption of the Charter of
Rights and Freedoms, and more
generally the Constitutional repa-
triation in 1982.

Manfredi asked two questions,
"are Quebecers particularly al-

*"It's not that Quebecers don't
believe in multiculturalism, but
that they believe that
multiculturalism in French and
multiculturalism in English are
two different things,"*

ienated from the Charter? Second
question is, has the Charter pro-
duced provincial policy discre-
tion in general sense?"

He answered the first by refer-
ring to a study conducted by re-



Choking on the MAI

by Keri Kosuri

and

Andrea Mason

NDP demands debate on global treaty

The Liberal government continued its attempt to ram the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) down the throats of Canadians during last Thursday's parliamentary session. NDP Trade Critic Bill Blaikie's demand for an emergency debate in the House of Commons was refused and Prime Minister Jean Chrétien declined to answer NDP leader Alexa McDonough's questions concerning the MAI.

The MAI, a global trade agreement initiated by the United States and the European Union, is currently being negotiated within the

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) — a collective of 29 wealthy industrialized nations.

The treaty will lead to the deregulation of global capital markets, preventing governments from enforcing any social or environmental restrictions on multinational companies.

In his request for the debate, Blaikie declares, "What makes this an emergency is that the government is poised to sign an international agreement directly affecting the rights of ...the Canadian people. The Liberals are negotiat-

ing a trade agreement with far-reaching implications for the sovereignty of Canada. Canadians deserve a debate to know what is at stake for labour standards, our social programs and for our cultural sovereignty."

If enacted, the MAI would bind future governments to the treaty. Signatories will have to commit to five years before withdrawing. Existing investments under the agreement would continue to bind for an additional 15 years.

"Should the Government of Canada sign such an agreement," asserts Blaikie, "it would offend the centuries-old principle of parliamentary government that no Government or Parliament may tie the hands of a future Parliament."

For the last two years, the Minister of International Trade, Sergio Marchi has been participating in closed-door negotiations regarding the MAI treaty. Canadians have been completely excluded from the process. No details about the treaty were ever presented to Parliament.

In fact, according to NDP Research and Communications Officer Dave Loan, the Liberals only acknowledged their involvement in the MAI negotiations after information regarding the agreement was leaked onto the Internet last May.

They have refused to sponsor a full series of public hearings across the country as requested by the NDP.

"The government clearly intended to ram this through signed, sealed and delivered before the election," says McDonough. "Canadians are being affected but not consulted."

And Canadians will certainly feel the ramifications of such a treaty.

In the words of the OECD Director-General, Renato Ruggerio, "We are writing the constitution of a single global economy."

"This global treaty is primarily designed to make it possible for transnational corporations to move their investments and operations anywhere in the world unfettered by government intervention and regulation," contends Maude Barlow of the Council of Canadians.

According to Barlow, countries will no longer be able to protect the public interest by requiring that foreign-based corporations

meet certain economic, cultural and environmental standards through their operations.

McDonough concurs, stating that "the MAI is a conferring of rights on corporations. And corporations, are doing quite nicely already."

After a briefing from Canada's Chief Negotiator, Bill Dyamond, it became clear to McDonough that any discussion of citizens' rights is "purely ceremonial." She says, "there are no standards which will be enforced across the board. There's no clout, no teeth."

"Because the MAI is an international treaty, once it has been adopted and ratified, it becomes the supreme law of the land, superseding Parliament and the provincial legislatures," states Barlow.

Participating countries reserve the right to throw back any legislation or policies that threaten the economic rights of big business. The participating countries are required by the treaty to target such anti-corporate legislation and circulate their compiled lists to other participating countries and corporations.

"The MAI will handcuff governments when it comes to developing and implementing legislation, policies and programs on a variety of fronts," says Barlow.

The Dispute Settlement clause of the MAI is a blatant demonstration of how governments are "handcuffed" to the privileges of

which will "grant corporations the right to challenge the decision of municipal, regional or national governments, effectively treating corporations as nation states."

The National Trade Section of The MAI considers government practices that do not favor the economic interests of foreign corporations as "discriminatory." The section states that no foreign investor should be treated less favorable than a domestic investor. A foreign investor is automatically granted the right to sue the provincial and federal governments if the investor feels that it has not received equal treatment as its domestic counterpart.

A foreign investor could sue the government, for having laws that in any way endanger the interests of the transnational company.

Countries will not be allowed to restrict what they can buy across international borders. Any benefits such as sharing technology with the local population, importing and exporting, and creating domestic employment will also be restricted. As a result, developing countries will suffer the most.

Consequently, Canadian sovereignty will be compromised. Government subsidies granted to indigenous nations would no longer be allowed. Canadian content rules for magazines, newspapers, radio, and television would not be permitted. The treaty would con-

sider all tax breaks granted to ads and postal subsidies which promote Canadian magazines as "discriminatory" and so ban them.

These stipulations would make it impossible for governments to initiate trade embargoes. The international trade sanctions imposed against South Africa in the 1980s, for example, could be successfully contested under the MAI.

Essentially, any laws which impede the financial interests of a corporation will be called into question.

The MAI, declares McDonough, "is just one more avenue to slide down in the race to the bottom. We need to go into the next millennium with rules that respect the rights of citizens in Canada and other countries. We must ensure that those rights are not being trampled by multinationals who are already very powerful."

corporations. The clause establishes a provision allowing foreign-based corporations to directly sue governments. The clause also guarantees that corporations will be provided with their own investor state dispute mechanisms to sue governments, thereby facilitating the process. Corporations, on the other hand, remain free from government intervention and regulations. Governments are prohibited from suing corporations.

The disputes will be settled before an international tribunal whose decisions will be binding and final. The decisions will be decided, not by a jury, but by appointed officials.

Blaikie criticizes the National Treatment Section of the MAI,

"...it would offend the centuries-old principle of parliamentary government that no Government or Parliament may tie the hands of a future Parliament."

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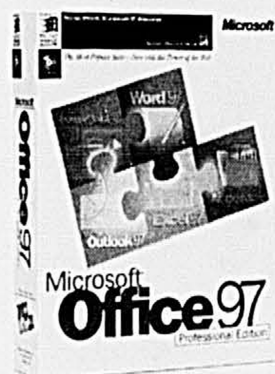
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Powell Building, 3637 Peel St., Room 200

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